

THEATER LOGISTICS' IMPORTANT LINK TO TRANSITION AND EXIT STRATEGY

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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TO TRANSITION AND EXIT STRATEGY**

by

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ABSTRACT

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This paper will use the Iraqi War as a case study and examine the current logistics capabilities of the ISF, identify important changes and requirements for the successful logistical support of the ISF operations, and propose ways to improve actions in future conflicts. The research reveals definite issues and challenges in planning for the reconstruction and transfer of authority from coalition forces to a stable Iraqi government following the overthrow. Even with the lack of planning, the development of the ISF was rapid, forces were brought on and trained to perform some of the duties required to protect the country, people and property, but their ability to establish a sustainable capability so the coalition forces could hand over responsibility took an extremely long time. Building capabilities and requirements, and training combat service support functions, including medical, transportation, supply management and requisition, and maintenance were all shortcomings the ISF needed to have addressed to achieve the U.S.'s strategic goals in Iraq.

THEATER LOGISTICS' IMPORTANT LINK TO TRANSITION AND EXIT STRATEGY

On May 1, 2003, President George W. Bush declared the end of major combat operations in Iraq, and “now our coalition is engaged in securing and reconstructing that country.”¹ This guidance presented a new national interest to the United States (U.S.) military forces involved in the Iraq war, because the U.S. military had planned on turning over this phase of the war to the United Nations (UN). The Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, advocated that the military’s critical mission was war-fighting, which is defined as combat operations, with little emphasis on post conflict tasks.² Therefore, the military had not planned on conducting Phase IV, the stabilization phase, or Phase V, Enabling Civil Authority, while developing their war plans. The Coalition’s responsibility of winning the war would not happen until Phase IV was complete and required the Coalition to react and adapt quickly.

Transformation and transitioning a war-torn nation-state, or “Nation-Building,” is complicated with many elements that must be carefully thought out and worked. Stabilization and reconstruction operations require a mix of skills and training addressing a range of issues, including (1) establishing public security and the rule of law, (2) facilitating political transitions, (3) rebuilding infrastructure, and (4) jumpstarting economic recovery.³ These issues cover a vast array of the elements of national power and the issues’ sub-elements further require even more in-depth thought and scrutiny; as such this paper cannot cover all of these issues and their sub-elements. James Dobbins posits that:

The prime objective of any nation-building operation is to make violent societies peaceful... Economic development and political reform are

important instruments for effecting this transformation, but will not themselves ensure it. Rather, such efforts need to be pursued within a broader framework, the aim of which is to redirect the competition for wealth and power, which takes place within any society, from violent into peaceful channels.

The first-order priorities for any nation-building mission are public security and humanitarian assistance. If the most basic human needs for safety, food, and shelter are not being met, any money spent on political or economic development is likely to be wasted.⁴

Therefore, it is my intent to use the Iraqi war as a case study to provide a focus on how the delayed response to logistics control and support negatively affects public security and the rule of law, and present possible ways to improve future Phase IV operations.

Enforcement of the rules of law and establishing public security are vital to the re-stabilization process once a nation-state has been defeated, and are essential to ensuring economic growth and the re-establishment of governmental bodies, public trust, and the safety of all. As is well known, it takes time to re-establish an overthrown nation's security elements and military forces. The military on the ground represents the only capability to manage the impact of a leadership vacuum and head off a rapid spiral into lawlessness and human tragedy.⁵ With continued aggression from insurgents and rogue factions after major combat is completed, it therefore is the military on the ground that must engage in the effort to ensure security and develop training and support systems to restore the defeated nation's capabilities to support that security effort.

As is supported by the old quartermaster and transportation axioms, "it's not over until the paper work's done," and "nothing happens until something moves," logistics support capabilities are vital to any reconstruction and stabilization effort.

Background and Organizational Structure

The Phase IV task, stabilization and the reconstruction of Iraq, was met with poor planning and implementation, especially considering the U.S.'s recent past experiences in six previous conflicts; Kuwait, Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, and Afghanistan.⁶ It has taken more than four years after the march to Baghdad for the U.S. military and newly trained Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) to begin showing a rise in capability to secure the country and an improvement in the reconstruction process.

Iraq's Phase IV got underway in May of 2003 when the Coalition Provision Authority (CPA) issued CPA Order 2 disbanding the Iraqi military and dissolving the Ministry of Defense (MOD),⁷ and firing a significant number of the members of the Ministry of Interior (MOI) and its police forces.⁸

These two ministries were the heart and soul of the ISF. While most consider the military arm of the MOD as the ISF, it actually encompasses all elements of the security forces of both the MOD and MOI. The MOD has the three military services; Army, Navy, and Air Force, and the MOI has the police forces (National Police (NP), Iraqi Security Police (ISP), and Department of Border Enforcement (DBE) among others).⁹

The Coalition forces understood the importance of rebuilding and instituting a national defense capability and began to develop the New Iraqi Army. In June of 2003, the U.S. Army contracted with Vinnell Corporation for the training of the first nine battalions, or 9,000 recruits of the New Iraqi Army. But in April 2004, because the Multi-National Forces – Iraq (MNF-I) had received reports of problems with the capabilities of those being trained through the programs established by the Vinnell Corporation, MNF-I established the Multi-National Security Transition Command – Iraq (MNSTC-I)¹⁰ to take over the responsibility for training and equipping the Iraqi Army.

Soon after establishment, MNSTC-I developed a plan to train and establish the Iraqi Army (IA). They began training the IA forces in individual military occupational specialty skills, focusing on security, policing duties, and combat duties, with little to no focus on combat support and service support duties. Once the individual training was completed, MNSTC-I transferred operational control and follow-on training to the Multi-National Corps – Iraq (MNC-I), which trained the soldiers in collective and unit level combat skills and operations.¹¹

The police forces' (NP, IPS, and DBE) training was coordinated through the U.S. Department of State's (DOS) Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs for the first year which began in May of 2003. As a result of a confluence of events, including the ineffective and insufficient training of the Iraqi police forces and the non-permissive environment and scale of the program being beyond the DOS and Department of Justice capabilities, President Bush issued the National Security Presidential Directive 36 (NSPD-36) in May 2004. This directive gave the Department of Defense (DOD) and ultimately MNSTC-I, the additional responsibility of training and equipping the police forces.¹²

MNF-I had to train and equip more than 171,000 MOD and MOI security forces in less than two years. The training, as previously noted, encountered setbacks and these forces were not ready to engage the enemy as quickly as they were required, but problems with equipping the forces had even more serious repercussions.

Problems Developing a Logistics Support Concept and Capability

The U.S. and other Coalition militaries' experiences and long established logistical support and control systems would lead one to believe the Coalition could develop

systems and would emphasize the requirement to ensure proper accountability, maintenance, and distribution for a redeveloping force, but the Coalition had many issues to overcome. First of which was the lack of prior planning and emphasis from the chain of command on logistics requirements, especially accountability. Other issues included the rush to equip and train forces, the culture of logistics within the ISF, the division of authority and responsibilities between and within the ministries of the Iraqi government, and the corruption of personnel in all levels of the process.

To better understand the issues and problems incurred and develop solutions to them, each will be addressed separately.

The Planning and Emphasis from the Chain Of Command

The Multi-National Forces–Iraq, called Combined Joint Task Force-7 (CJTF-7) until 2004, inherited the responsibility of the reconstruction process in June 2003 with little time or resources dedicated to the planning effort for the reconstruction and stabilization.¹³ It took until 2005 for MNF-I to begin putting any emphasis on the development of the ISF's logistics capabilities and until 2007 for true emphasis to be placed on the logistics functions and training the leadership. In fact, according to the subcommittee on oversight and investigations report in 2007, "The generation of combat support and combat service support units as well as the logistics system, was intentionally postponed until most of the combat forces were trained and equipped and put into action...Now that most of the MOD and MOI security forces have been trained and equipped, the generation of logistics capabilities has become a major focus."¹⁴

The logistics support concepts developed by MNF–I after February 2005 for the MOD and MOI were separate concepts for each ministry,¹⁵ and designed to "govern

operational orders and other plans to develop and implement logistics capabilities within the ISF including the ability to maintain equipment, supply security forces, transport personnel and equipment, and maintain the health of Iraqi soldiers and police.”¹⁶ The first concept to be approved, the Concept of Logistics Support for the Ministry of Defense, was finally sanctioned by both parties involved, MOD and MNF-I, on March 1, 2006.¹⁷ The support concept for the MOI forces was completed and endorsed by MNF-I, but as of October 2006 it was still not formally consented to by the MOI.¹⁸

Even with the protracted approval and lack of agreement to the concepts, security forces were being trained and equipped without a defined logistics strategy. The overly accelerated force generation effort without the development of the logistical support structure and requirements obstructed and complicated the ability for Coalition forces to hand over the responsibility for security and law enforcement to the ISF, forcing Iraqi battalions and force elements to be declared operational and then forced into combat before they were ready.¹⁹ A top U.S. commander in Iraq said what was lacking were the systems that pay people and supply people..., he asked not to be identified because his assessment of the Iraqi capabilities went beyond the military’s public descriptions.²⁰

At that time, MNF-I was reporting readiness of a unit based on the number of personnel trained, equipped, and assigned to units, so MNF-I could illustrate and promote how far they had come in providing ISF. What they were not effectively reporting was the equipment and personnel readiness as they relate to whether or not they were mission capable, or whether personnel were fully trained and/or available. The abilities for those forces or units to conduct sustainment operations, or their capabilities to conduct unit level logistical operations to include preventive maintenance,

supply requisition, transportation coordination, and equipment accountability, were still lacking or were non-existent.

The Rush to Equip and Train the Forces

After the CPA dissolved the MOD, MNSTC-I had to develop the Iraqi Army's logistical system from ground zero.²¹ "The lack of logistics experience and expertise within the Iraqi armed forces is substantial and hampers their readiness and capability,"²² and have contributed to the decrease in the number of Iraqi battalions capable of operating independently.²³

In September of 2007, the Independent Commission on the Security Forces of Iraq reported:

The Iraqi Army remains heavily dependent on contracted support to satisfy day-to-day requirements...Manning the logistics force structure will be a major undertaking, as the Iraqi Army has concentrated on its combat units and has only recently begun the process of manning and training logistics organizations.²⁴

Growth of the ISF was astronomical. By July of 2005, the DOD reported having recruited, vetted, trained, and equipped more than 171,000 personnel.²⁵ This throughput of forces with the lack of emphasis on logistics responsibility is still causing a lack of accountability and force degradation. "[T]he operational demands of rapidly equipping the ISF as it was forced to fight the growing insurgency limited the MNSTC-I's ability to conform to accounting procedures."²⁶

Two orders, MNF-I and MNC-I issued in May and June of 2004, directed Coalition forces responsible for issuing equipment to the ISF to 1) record the serial numbers for all sensitive items such as weapons and radios; 2) enter relevant information onto a Department of the Army hand receipt form and obtain signatures from receiving ISF;

and 3) submit property accountability information to MNSTC-I.²⁷ The GAO audit reports that initial efforts in 2004 to establish hand receipting and establish national warehouses and regional distribution centers, did not result in a fully operational distribution network until mid-2005, over 1 year after MNF-I began distributing large quantities of equipment to the ISF.²⁸

The reasons MNF-I gave for units' failures to follow those orders included the length of time necessary to fully develop an equipment distribution network, staffing weaknesses, and the operational demands of equipping the Iraqi forces during the war.²⁹

MNSTC-I also believed inventorying and accounting for weapons by serial number and registering them as required by the DOD Small Arms Serialization Program was not required as these arms were purchased under the IRRF. As of October 2006, MNSTC-I felt that compliance with a Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR) recommendation to comply with the DOD Small Arms Serialization Program was unattainable.³⁰

Even with the "fully operational distribution network" available in mid-2005, some of the materiel being issued and some that were previously issued, especially sensitive items, remain unaccounted for. The General Accountability Office (GAO) reported in January 2007, "DOD and MNF-I may not be able to account for Iraqi security forces' receipt of about 90,000 rifles and about 80,000 pistols which were reported as issued before early October 2005."³¹

As of November 2007, more than 491,000 personnel are assigned to the MOD and MOI, not including civilian staff or Facilities Protection Service personnel. This

number exceeds the total number of trained personnel because many of them have never been trained, as rapid hiring over the past four years outstripped academy training capacity. The MOD and MOI, also, do not accurately track which of those trained personnel are still on the force; some still being accounted for have been killed in action or have left the service for other reasons.³²

The reported aggregate numbers of trained and equipped forces do not provide information on the capabilities and needs of individual units.³³ Reports of under-equipped Iraqi soldiers are common; one reporter noted in February of 2007, that Iraqi soldiers manning checkpoints in Baghdad wore plastic shower sandals instead of army boots.³⁴ Another report indicated accusations that Iraqi officers sold the very uniforms their men were supposed to be issued.³⁵ The inability to properly account for, distribute to, and requisition equipment for personnel assigned to units burdens the supply system and would be better managed with properly trained logistical personnel.

The first training course providing Iraqi officers and non-commissioned officers any training in logistics was developed and taught by the Australian Army in March and April 2005.³⁶ In February of 2007, the Iraqi army staffing for logistics support was still only about 7 logistic support personnel to every 100 fighters, whereas the U.S. forces maintain a 3 to 1 ratio.³⁷ The lack of logistics experience and expertise is not confined to the operational level of forces; it is also a problem in the MOI and MOD, which will be discussed more in later paragraphs.

The MOD, Iraqi Joint Headquarters, Iraqi Ground Force Command, Army divisions, and MNSTC-I are addressing these military shortfalls by working diligently on the process of training logisticians for combat, base support, and depot-level positions.³⁸

In April 2007, Bill Roggio reported that the Iraqi Army had about 13,000 support personnel and was expecting to increase that force by 33,000 troops by the end of 2007, and this expansion would provide the bare minimum support necessary for independent operations.³⁹ The construction of national-level maintenance and warehousing facilities at the Taji National Maintenance and Supply Depots should be completed by 2009. Training enough personnel in critical logistics trades to fully staff these depots will take longer.⁴⁰

Logistics training and leadership at national strategic and operational levels is important, especially with the many different types of systems, sources of those systems, and age of the systems being issued to the ISF. The Coalition continues to provide arms and equipment from a variety of sources, including those donated, captured, and purchased.⁴¹ These different sources provide new, unused equipment as well as used outdated systems. As of August 2006, over 277,000 weapons have been issued;⁴² however, repair parts were only procured for 5 of the 12 types of weapons purchased and the property books did not reflect all procured parts.⁴³

“Aged equipment, much of it donated by coalition countries, only compounds the Iraqi military’s logistical problem by gobbling up disproportionate amounts of spare parts.”⁴⁴ Not only is aged equipment a problem but different types of similar equipment and the shortages of the equipment are too. For instance, the Iraqi Army has dozens of different types of light-transport trucks, but lacks the parts and maintenance know how to fix the different systems.⁴⁵

The effect of these equipment issues is exemplified in an article by David Axe, which told of the problems of the 10th Iraqi Army Division,

A dearth of vehicles plus a broader lack of logistical support means the 10th Division is incapable of sustaining operations away from its bases for more than a few hours ... This effectively limits it to urban operations in Basra and short sorties from a handful of rural installations.”⁴⁶ This is consistent with the overall structure of the Iraqi Army.⁴⁷

When a vehicle breaks down and becomes non-operational, there are no vehicles to replace it.⁴⁸

Preventive maintenance is an alien concept to Iraqis, an attitude that exacerbates the lack of spare or backup vehicles. Where maintenance teams do exist and Iraqi commanders do make upkeep of equipment a priority, they face the further hurdle of acquiring spare parts from Taji National Depot (TND), which appears unable to keep up with requirements.⁴⁹

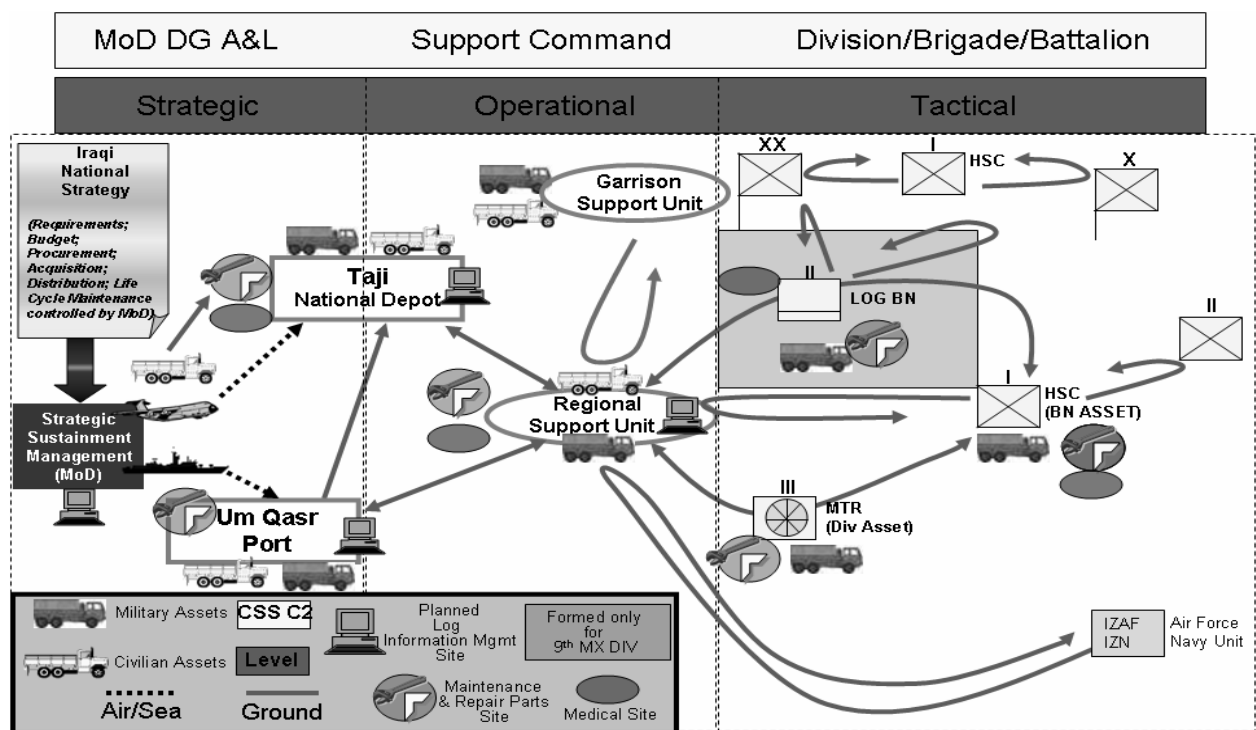
The ongoing influx of personnel, poor accountability systems, and various maintenance support requirements for the different types of equipment will continue to cause logistics problems for the MOD, MOI, and MNF-I, until properly trained and experienced personnel, leadership, and accountability systems are in place to fix the problem.

Logistics Culture within the ISF

The Iraqis are under new guidance and procedures for equipment repair, maintenance, and accountability. The Iraqi forces are accustomed to the Russian concept of replacing equipment and rear area maintenance and not to the U.S. concept of preventive and unit-level maintenance, but they are being rushed into the new western system before they can successfully adapt. The inability to track and repair equipment and provide equipment readiness ratings are similar failures to those failures the ISF has with tracking their actual manning strengths for all elements of the Iraqi

forces.⁵⁰ U.S. commanders and soldiers report the Iraqis in general fail to maintain equipment.⁵¹

The Concept of Logistics Operations for the Iraqi Defense Forces are presented in the following diagram and information. The 101st Forward Support Battalion Briefing gives this concept briefing to Military Transition Team (MITT) members in a 2-hour class on logistics operations. The logistics supply system is divided into three levels of support, (1) Strategic, (2) Operational, (3) Tactical.



This is the overall concept showing all three levels of support and the four lines of support.

The Strategic Level: The left of the chart shows the strategic elements. The Director General Acquisition, Logistics and Infrastructure (DG A&L) manages the strategic sustainment system and drives the logistic system.

The Operational Level: The center of the chart shows the operational elements. The Garrison Support Units (GSUs) provide support to their base, the Regional Support Units (RSUs) provide third line support to their region, and the Taji National Depot (TND) provides fourth line support to the Iraqi Armed Forces.

The Tactical Level: The right of the chart shows the tactical elements. The Headquarters and Service Companies (HSCs) provide first line support for the Battalions, Brigades, or Division Headquarters. The Motorized Transport Regiments and Logistic Battalions provide second line support to the HSCs.⁵²

Figure 1.

The MiTT members are expected to understand this concept of logistics so that when they are assigned to (embedded with) the Iraqi counterpart units, they can assist and help coordinate supply and maintenance management. Part of the MiTT's shortcomings in working with the Iraqi military forces include the amount of time allocated to this training and their familiarity with automated supply systems, as the Iraqi supply system is not automated and runs on paper. In the Iraqi system "[a]ll supply and maintenance requisitions must be in 'hard copy' and stamped at every level of command to be filled."⁵³ This paper based system obstructs the ability for units to coordinate with other units for parts or supplies, even when these units are just down the block.

In 2007, Iraqi commanders still complain of the problems receiving equipment and supplies from the TND. As an example, one Iraqi commander said for him to acquire ammunition through the existing Iraqi logistics system; he had "to send an officer in person to the MOD in Baghdad with a requisition request. Upon receipt of this personally delivered request, the MOD might then take months to fill and distribute the requested ammunition – all this despite the ready availability of ammunition" in the TND.⁵⁴

Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) William Schiek, U.S. Army, reported "[a]t first, each logistics organization we dealt with in the Iraqi Army was like a separate fiefdom...There

was little coordination, if any, between adjacent units...some of these officers had worked together in similar roles in the old Iraqi Army, none of them knew the others worked at Camp Taji until we got them all together.”⁵⁵ The TND was and still is its own fiefdom. Some barriers have been broken, but the TND is full of new vehicles, hundreds of thousands of rounds of ammunition, boots, uniforms, and many other end items that still have not been made available to Iraqi soldiers.⁵⁶

Even though the Iraqi Army seeks to foster independence from contractor support and conduct all logistics efforts with their own forces, many command posts and headquarters were found to have vehicles and equipment that were inoperable – and more often than not the Iraqis were waiting for the Coalition to take care of the problem for them.⁵⁷

The U.S. proposal to improve some of the requisition, accountability, and maintenance tracking requirements will take what is now a paper-based system and retool it to eventually incorporate a computer-run supply database patterned after one used by the U.S. Air Force.⁵⁸ The Independent Commission on the Security Forces of Iraq reports that “before that can happen the software needs to be translated into Arabic, soldiers will need to gain the skills to operate it, and solutions are needed to the problems of connectivity that the regular electricity shortages will inevitably cause.”⁵⁹

The MOI and MOD

Many elements of the Iraqi Army are now capable of conducting counterinsurgency operations, but most also remain dependent on Coalition enablers. Coalition advisers report steady but inconsistent improvement in the abilities of the MOD and the MOI to perform key ministerial functions; develop and implement plans

and policies; and provide direction and oversight to intelligence, personnel management, acquisitions, logistics, communications, and budgeting. U.S.-funded programs and advisory efforts continue to improve the capabilities of the Iraqi forces but internal sectarian biases, leadership, logistics deficiencies, and a dependence on the Coalition for many combat support functions continue to hinder the Iraqi forces' ability to operate without Coalition assistance.⁶⁰

As noted by David Cloud,

While much of the equipment for the new army is provided by American and other foreign governments, the ministry (MoD) is nominally in charge of distributing it to troops from supply depots being established around the country.

Even routine equipment and supply requests are supposed to be cleared by ministry officials, but there are not enough personnel to handle the job or procedures in place to get it done smoothly.

Instead, American trainers embedded with each Iraqi unit often have to step in to ensure the necessary equipment is delivered.⁶¹

In September of 2007, the U.S. GAO reported that the DOD has set December 2008 as the goal for the Iraqi government to provide day-to-day items to the TND, and the MOI aims to become self-sufficient in procuring and managing repair parts by the end of 2008.⁶² At present the national logistics system cannot yet address the needs of the Iraqi units fighting the war,⁶³ and the MOI "has no mechanism to correctly match the limited funding it receives from the national budget with valid requirements and growth projections."⁶⁴

"The MOI logistics and sustainment structure is based on a civilian policing model for support and is designed similar to the MOD, to provide maintenance, transportation and supply support at national, provincial, regional and local levels in order to sustain civil security training and operations."⁶⁵ The support this system is providing should

improve the overall equipment and unit readiness as evidenced by a new monthly logistics status report, established by the MOI and in place since October 2007. This monthly report requires the provinces to report their equipment authorization and on-hand status, and has facilitated increasingly accurate and timely information.⁶⁶ But it does not eliminate the problems the two ministries still face.

Shortages upon receipt of purchases and requisitions, and in-fighting between the ministries continue to cause additional issues “Bureaucratic and sectarian squabbles account for some of the shortages.”⁶⁷ These squabbles effect readiness exemplified by the Iraqi Navy which “belongs to and gets their spares [spare parts] from the recalcitrant ministry of defense, but its diesel is provided by the even more stubborn ministry of oil, which has strained relations with defense and has been known to withhold fuel shipments.”⁶⁸ This withholding of fuel has caused Coalition forces to intervene to ensure the Iraqis have enough diesel and benzene to operate generators and continue daily operations.⁶⁹

As the ministries continue to work on their issues, they are building the necessary institutions and processes to fulfill their missions. However, their capacity is still hampered by bureaucratic inexperience, excessive layering, and over-centralization.⁷⁰ Logistically knowledgeable and capable leadership is the critical element needed by the ministries. At present, the lack of logistics expertise at the national level, and within both uniformed and civilian leadership, requires one-on-one mentoring.⁷¹

This one-on-one mentoring is being provided by Coalition forces as they keep the focus on improving the security ministries’ capacity in force management, personnel, material acquisition, resource management, sustainment, training, and development.

The current challenge is synchronizing the force generation, training, and replenishment efforts. Ministerial planners have recognized the need to synchronize planning, programming, and budgeting efforts with their long-range plans.⁷² They, however, lack the expertise and experience to manage the long-range plans and the contracts for support associated with those plans. Contracts established by Coalition forces to support the ISF were expected to be renewed or new ones put in place by the ministries when the contracts expired and the expiration dates were noted on the long-range plans. As those contracts expired, the ministries failed to coordinate the requirement according to the plans established, and they had to be re-instituted by Coalition contractors.⁷³

Corruption

The Coalition's four main areas of emphasis in developing the MOD and MOI and their forces have been to: (1) develop ministerial capacity; (2) improve the proficiency of the Iraqi forces; (3) build specific logistic, sustainment, and training capacities; and (4) support the expansion of the MOD and MOI forces. Special problems within these areas include corruption and lack of professionalism, sectarian bias, leader shortfalls, logistics deficiencies, and dependence on Coalition forces for many combat support functions.⁷⁴

"Widespread logistical problems reflect a deeply ingrained culture of corruption that has long plagued the Iraqi military."⁷⁵ In 2004, the Iraqi government reported "theft and corruption had drained \$1 billion from ministry of defense coffers."⁷⁶ In late 2005, there were indications of widespread corruption involving the MOD's purchases of equipment, and investigations were initiated on kickbacks of more than \$300 million for

purchases of defective and outdated helicopters, machine guns, and armored personnel carriers by the MOD's former procurement chief.⁷⁷

A top ranked Iraqi Military leader, Mohammed Jassim Abdul Qadir, blamed much of his army's problems on the decision by the CPA to staff the MOD with "civilians, who lacked extensive military experience."⁷⁸ These appointed civilians, raised in a culture that accepted corruption as a way of doing business, purchased equipment and supplies from and awarded contracts to their cronies or companies that offered kickbacks. Those that were also in a position to be able to award commands within the security forces even handed out those command positions to individuals who had family or tribal connections.⁷⁹

The equipment provided reflect two major problems: first, it is not adequate for the job they are required to perform (does not approach that of the MNF-I forces, has never been adequate to deal with a developing insurgent threat, and has never been linked to plans to transition from counter insurgency warfare to national defense.)⁸⁰ Second, these sources "have often provided low quality equipment and been corrupt themselves."⁸¹

In April 2007, the MOD began to increase its armored forces, but its efforts are falling far behind need, again made worse by continued mismanagement and corruption, forcing Iraq to expand the use of "total package" military procurement,⁸² expecting this to improve contract compliance and reducing or eliminating cronyism among those responsible for the purchases and those providing the items.

The Iraqi government's ability to enforce the law and prosecute those who were not following appropriate purchasing methods met with problems of corruption itself. In

July 2007, “Iraqi government and many security force units were still applying the law on a sectarian basis when left on their own... any progress made by the security forces in enforcing the law more even-handedly [was attributed] to the presence of coalition units and embedded training teams, rather than to the Iraqi government.”⁸³ MNF-I and the Iraqi Government continue to struggle with sectarian and militia influences, along with corruption and illegal activities, while trying to develop the ISF.⁸⁴

To resolve and place better controls on the purchasing problems, and due to substantial increases in the Iraqi-funded Foreign Military Sales (FMS) case load, the DOD established a task force in July 2007 to monitor efforts to improve the procurement and delivery of defense articles and services to Iraq using FMS authorities. The task force recommended and the MNSTC-I is now implementing two key changes to the way they support the ministries. The first was to increase the size of the Office of Security Cooperation at MNSTC-I with appropriately trained personnel to assist in more effectively defining requirements, processing cases, and upgrading the head of the office, at least temporarily, from a colonel to a 2-star general, and second, giving high priority within the Defense Transportation System to FMS materiel destined for the Government of Iraq.⁸⁵

Recommendation

With all of this being said, the Iraqi Army was being rebuilt from the top down at the operational and tactical levels,⁸⁶ but the Coalition was not focusing on rebuilding the strategic level of the process or working on policy and the support requirements for those operational forces. To truly rebuild from the top down, the Coalition needed to focus earlier and still needs to focus on strategic and theater level leadership,

responsibilities, requirements, capabilities, and authorities. It also needs to focus on developing the link between those activities and strategic distribution, maintenance and supply processes, and their relationship to the support of the armed forces and the police forces.

The emphasis on operational rebuild has ensured “(m)any of today’s senior Iraqi military leaders are familiar with western military methods, having attended U.S. military schools. Iraq’s new generals, colonels, majors, captains, and lieutenants are being encouraged to use initiative, as opposed to the Stalinist mindset practiced by the Saddam-era military.”⁸⁷ “The Iraqi military also is grooming a new generation of noncommissioned officers...Historically, the Iraqi military has given almost all authority and responsibility to its commissioned officers, while the noncoms pass along orders to the rank-and-file.”⁸⁸ “This is different than [what they are now learning,] the U.S. military’s system, in which NCOs have much more authority and responsibility.”⁸⁹

The MiTT system is significantly helping to improve the Iraqi’s transition; the U.S. should develop in the National Guard and Reserves capabilities of post-conflict operations for security, medical, engineer, and public affairs operations.⁹⁰ The current medical, engineer, security, and public affairs units in the National Guard and Reserves are not trained or designed to handle post-conflict operations, but could easily be restructured and transformed to accomplish this mission. The personnel in these reserve units are already civilian sensitive because they typically hold similar occupations within their communities and should be able to quickly adapt to the reconstruction efforts.

The Iraqi forces' ability to secure Iraq with significantly reduced Coalition support will improve as their readiness levels improve. Such improvements will remain constrained in the MOD and MOI because of their deficiencies in logistics, combat support functions, and combat enablers and their shortages of experienced officers and leaders.⁹¹

Logistics are a problem in large part because the Iraqi governmental bureaucracy is complex and cumbersome, and has very little expertise in logistics.⁹² "Logistics remains the Achilles' heel of the Iraqi ground forces. Although progress is being made, achieving an adequate force wide logistics capability is at least 24 months away."⁹³ At this point, success of the ISF is dependent on the willingness of the U.S. Government to enter into a long-term security relationship with the Government of Iraq, and the honest recognition that the U.S. will almost certainly have to continue to fund this effort for some years to come.⁹⁴

The emphasis on logistics in future operations must come earlier, and must include a simultaneous rebuild of strategic level sustainment capabilities with the theater security capabilities. Developing and implementing a National Logistics Agency (NLA), an organization similar to the U.S.'s Defense Logistics Agency, that has a national responsibility for controlling logistical functions including: supplying the force; inventory operations and procedures; maintenance operations; contracting supplies, equipment and services; distribution operations; and accountability control processes among others, would dramatically improve the Coalitions ability to transition and exit the country.

This NLA organization would require the training to perform the requisite sustainment functions which could be accomplished through contracted civilian/private sector activities, or internal military operators familiar with theater level and national level operations.

In an Iraqi type nation where, intentionally or unintentionally, there was a total dismantling of its armed and police forces and the government entities responsible for providing for and sustaining those forces, a NLA type of organization would be responsible to both Ministries of Defense and Interior for supporting the ISF, but would be aligned under the Prime Minister so the infighting would be minimized.

Conclusion

To succeed, nation-building operations require advance planning and a substantial commitment of money and manpower especially to logistical requirements and training. An approach to post-conflict activities that mirrors combat can result in the misapplication of resources, inappropriate tasks and goals, and ineffective operations.⁹⁵

“As critical as the development of a functioning logistics capability is for the Iraqi military, Coalition experts may be imposing on them a more complex and elaborate logistics system than is necessary. The logistics force structure plan developed by the Coalition for the Iraq Army appears to reflect the coalition’s preferences rather than the Iraqis’ needs.”⁹⁶ The Coalition forces need to consider what the ISF can do and how they operate, and mentor them to do it themselves. This is a perfect example of the old Chinese proverb: “Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.”

Executing a real-world handover and expansion of forces requires a major force transformation from a static, local defense force to a mobile national defense and security force. It means creating large numbers of nationally deployable forces with different training, pay, equipment, mobility and support, and facilities.⁹⁷ Without logistical capabilities and training, and emphasis on this area in the early stages of transition, security, and stability will not be realized or the handover of responsibility will never occur.

Endnote

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